

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A tracheostomy device including a tubular member adapted to provide a gas passage into the trachea through an opening in neck tissues and an external retainer for retaining the tubular member with the external surface of the neck adjacent the opening, characterized in that the patient end of the tubular member terminates adjacent the internal end of the opening without extending below the opening, and that the device includes an internal retainer for retaining the tubular member with the internal surface of the trachea adjacent the opening and a gas seal ~~into the trachea for~~ located in the trachea above the opening with a lower side exposed to gas pressure within the trachea and substantially sealing the trachea above the opening against the flow of gas along the trachea in either direction such that gas flow to and from the trachea is confined to the tubular member.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently amended) A tracheostomy device according to Claim 2 1, characterized in that the seal includes a fluid passage opening at one end of the seal and extending out of the trachea via the opening.
4. (Previously presented) A tracheostomy device according to Claim 3, characterized in that the fluid passage is a suction passage.
5. (Previously presented) A tracheostomy device according to Claim 2, characterized in that the seal includes a deformable annular ring arranged to engage the surface of the trachea.
6. (Previously presented) A tracheostomy device according to Claim 5, characterized in that the annular ring is inflatable.

7. (Previously presented) A tracheostomy device according to Claim 5, characterized in that the annular ring includes a resilient foam.

8. (Previously presented) A tracheostomy device according to Claim 5, characterized in that the seal includes a web extending across the ring.

9. (Previously presented) A tracheostomy device according to Claim 1, characterized in that the external retainer is a flange and that the internal retainer is a displaceable member.

10. (Previously presented) A tracheostomy device according to Claim 9, characterized in that the displaceable member is a hinged tab, and that the tab is connected with a cord by which the tab can be displaced.

11. (New) A tracheostomy device including a tubular member adapted to provide a gas passage into the trachea through an opening in neck tissues and an external retainer for retaining the tubular member with the external surface of the neck adjacent the opening characterized in that the patient end of the tubular member terminates adjacent the internal end of the opening, that the device includes an internal retainer for retaining the tubular member with the internal surface of the trachea adjacent the opening; that the external retainer is a flange, that the internal retainer is a displaceable member, that the displaceable member is a hinged tab, and that the tab is connected with a cord by which the tab can be displaced.